



Submissions
Climate Change Authority
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RE: Review of the National Wind Farm Commissioner (the Commissioner)

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) and the Commissioner have developed a productive working relationship that has assisted us in our work in this area.

In 2015, NHMRC published its *Statement and Information Paper: Evidence on Wind Farms and Human Health* that concluded there was no consistent evidence that wind farms caused adverse health effects. However, given the limitations of the existing evidence and continuing concerns expressed by some members of the community, NHMRC recommended high quality research was required.

NHMRC opened a Targeted Call for Research (TCR) into Wind Farms and Human Health in 2016 and awarded two grants:

1. *Establishing the physiological and sleep disruption characteristics of wind farm versus traffic noise disturbances in sleep.* Flinders University of South Australia, CIA – Associate Professor Peter Catchside
2. *Multidimensional Assessment of the Health Impacts of Infrasound: Two Randomised Controlled Trials.* University of New South Wales, CIA – Professor Guy Marks.

NHMRC has met with the Commissioner a number of times over the last three years, most recently in February 2018. These discussions have improved NHMRC's understanding of the concerns of some residents living near wind turbines and assisted us in responding to the complaints NHMRC receives about their effects. There has been a significant reduction in the number of complaints received by NHMRC on this issue since the Commissioner commenced, particularly in the last 12 months. It is likely that this reduction directly reflects the Commissioner's effectiveness in his interactions with concerned residents, industry and other stakeholders, and his resolution of many of the complaints received by his office.

NHMRC would welcome continuation of the role of the Commissioner at this time of growing investment in wind farms. A potential model for funding is that used for the electromagnetic energy (EME) program. Since 1996, the Australian Government has administered the EME program to provide information to the public and support research into health issues associated with mobile phones, mobile phone base stations and other communications devices and equipment. The program is funded by a levy paid annually by radio communication licence holders and collected by the Australian Communications and Media Authority.

Yours sincerely

Professor Anne Kelso AO
Chief Executive Officer

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